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ANNUAL REPORT

To May, 1876.

TO THE MEMBERS OF

THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART.

The Trustees of the Association for the year ending May, 1876, respectfully report :

The receipts during the year have been as follows :

Cash on hand at the beginning of the year....		\$79 06
Subscriptions to Funds, paid in.....		15,500 00
Annual Subscriptions.....		4,755 00
Exhibitions, Entrance-money.....	\$2,459 00	
Sales of Catalogues	1,352 90	
Sales of Etchings.....	45 00	
Sales of Photographs.....	83 60	3,940 50
Department of Public Parks :		
on account of Appropriation for 1875.....	\$21,767 96	
on account of Appropriation for 1876.....	2,320 45	24,088 41
Bills payable (increase).....		64 83
Receipts for year		<u>\$48,427 80</u>

The expenditures have been as follows :

Rents, and arrears of rents	\$12,827 19	
General expenses.....	6,074 88	
Salaries	2,400 00	
Fire Insurance.....	1,503 44	
Taxes.....	3,757 05	
Gas and Coal.....	628 49	
Printing, Catalogues, Photographs, Station- ery, &c.....	2,407 28	
Alterations and Repairs.....	1,389 62	\$30,987 95
Interest.....		2,129 06
Cesnola Collection, paid on account of balance,	12,527 50	
Show-cases.....	1,071 11	
Furniture	171 50	13,770 11
Cash on hand, May 1, 1876		1,540 68
Expenditures for year		<u>\$48,427 80</u>

The present financial condition of the Museum is as follows :

Total Subscriptions to Fund.....	\$260,674 31	
Donations of Works of Art, value.....	69,116 50	
Bills Payable	16,000 00	
	<u>\$345,790 81</u>	
Paid for Paintings, Drawings, etc.....	\$145,494 74	
Works of Art, Donations....	69,116 50	
Cesnola Collection (\$4,345.47 still due).....	61,888 22	
Kensington Reproductions.....	3,160 76	
Etchings.....	3,278 46	
Show-cases.....	9,167 28	
Furniture.....	1,417 84	293,518 80
General expenses and repairs (balance).....		50,731 33
Cash on hand May 1st, 1876.....		1,540 63
		<u>\$345,790 81</u>

The receipts from tickets of admission have not been so large as in other years. This has been owing to two causes, the one being the addition of a second free day in each week, the other the plan of yearly memberships which has proved a continued success. The number of Annual Members is now 535, which is about the same as during the previous year.

The Trustees have great satisfaction in pointing to the improved financial condition of the Institution as shown by the Treasurer's report. The annual expenditures of the Museum are very large, and its receipts from Annual Memberships and the admission of visitors are far from adequate to meet them. But for the annual appropriations made by the Commissioners of Parks, for the conservation of the Museum property pending the erection of the new building for its reception, the Institution would have been unable to open its treasures to the public. Prior to the commencement of this annual appropriation by the Commissioners, the expenses had largely exceeded the receipts, and a debt had thus begun to accumulate, in addition to the balance remaining due to General L. P. di Cesnola for the purchase of the Cyprus Collection. Within the past year the Trustees resolved to make an effort for the extinguishment of this indebtedness.

In times of such unexampled business depression as has characterized the last year, such an attempt seemed almost hopeless ; but the Trustees congratulate the Members on the visible fact that the Museum has such a strong hold on its friends that they have responded most liberally and cheerfully to its call for assistance. A subscription amounting to \$26,500 has been made up, payable one half in the year 1875, and half in 1876. The first half, and in some instances the whole amount, subscribed, has been paid in and used for the purpose designed ; and the remainder of this subscription \$11,600 will, when received, reduce the entire outstanding debt of the Institution to about \$9,000. The Trustees entertain the hope that Members will exert themselves to make up this amount during the coming year, and that the Museum will be relieved from all embarrassment, and be in condition hereafter to devote such funds as it may have over its expenses to the purchase of objects of art.

The Trustees also congratulate the Members on the close of another year during which the usefulness of the Museum has been abundantly illustrated, its influence for good widely extended, and the expectation of increasing prosperity and success fully justified.

The object of the Association, kept constantly in mind by the Trustees, is the education of the public, and the cultivation in our country of a high standard of artistic taste. In the effort to accomplish this the Institution feels constantly its want of pecuniary resources, but this want has been largely supplemented by the generous manner in which citizens have lent to us their treasures of art, so that during the entire year the rooms have been more than filled with examples of the best historic and industrial value. In painting and sculpture, in decoration, in ceramic art, in those peculiar works of exquisite beauty which distinguish the Oriental nations, the exhibitions of the past year have been peculiarly rich.

As proposed in the last Annual Report the Trustees have opened the Museum free to the public on two days in the week instead of only one as heretofore ; and the public has signified its appreciation of the additional privileges by a constant, large and ever crowded attendance on those days. The total number of

visitors to the Museum during the year has been 66,663.

Of these, 9,836 were not Members, attending on days of charge, and paying for admission. The average daily attendance on free days has been 577, while the average admission by payment on fee days has been 53.

The studious purpose of a large number of the visitors is well shown by the purchase of hand-books and catalogues; and the Trustees take especial satisfaction, as in former years, in observing the number of artisans who visit the Museum for gaining instruction in their respective arts. It is also proper to notice the evidence from outside the galleries, that the Museum has already produced somewhat of its designed effect in directing the tastes of the community to a higher standard than was formerly indicated. This evidence is found in abundance. Styles of household and home decoration are materially changing in our city and in the country at large. The reproach which was formerly common, and to some extent true, has ceased to be heard, that every new American house was a fac-simile of every other in the general style of furniture and decorations. As tastes vary in reference to various departments of art, our citizens are beginning to gather around them objects of artistic beauty for the adornment of the rooms in which they live, and in which their families grow up, and thus children are surrounded by the refining and elevating influences of art. Our schools and academies of learning have within the past year given sensible indications of a new appreciation of the importance of art-education. In no respect is the change more manifest than in the attention now given to art-subjects by the American press. Reviews, magazines, and weekly and daily newspapers, have very largely increased the amount of space heretofore devoted to such subjects, and home and foreign art-intelligence is now an essential part of the information demanded by the readers of American journals. It is proper in this connection to acknowledge the valuable aid which the Museum has steadily received from the press. The exertions which the Trustees have made, under great embarrassment and difficulty, to keep up the instructive character of the gallery-exhibitions, have been heartily approved and seconded by the newspapers and magazines of our city and of the country. Our influence for

good has thus been made to reach far beyond the immediate circle of visitors to the Museum. From various parts of the country we hear of efforts on foot for the establishment of local museums of the same character, and founded on similar principles. Without falling into the error of claiming this manifest advance in American art-tastes as solely and wholly the result of our work, the Members of the Metropolitan Museum of Art have reason to be satisfied that they have been largely influential in producing it, and that the future will show still more of the beneficial effects of the metropolitan Institution.

During the past year the Museum has received from General Cesnola a large amount of antiquities discovered by him in Cyprus : some of these are still his property, and others he has added to the collection to replace articles originally forming part of the Cesnola Collection, but which were lost at sea, or otherwise prevented from reaching this country. These additions remain for the present unopened because of the want of room for their proper display in the building now occupied. General Cesnola has during the year continued his explorations, with results which in many respects have surpassed all his former successes, and may be regarded as among the most remarkable results of modern exploration in the remains of ancient art. The objects which have been found form another large collection, in bronze, stone, silver and gold, of the utmost importance as illustrations of that long line of local art of which the collection already owned by the Museum is so valuable an exponent. It is the desire of General Cesnola, as it is of the Trustees, that these discoveries should be added to the collection, instead of being scattered among the museums of the world. Their value would be greatly enhanced, for all purposes of art-study, could they be placed with the previously gathered work of ancient Cyprus. Our own collection would become more valuable, not alone from the addition, but from the new light thrown on objects already in it. The Cesnola Collection as it now exists may be regarded as of pre-eminent importance among art-collections, because of its unrivaled character as an exhibition of a local art-history during a period of twenty centuries. It stands as a reference-table, exhibiting the effects of influence in age after age from other

countries, the influence of arts which are more or less fully illustrated by various other collections in various Museums and Galleries. All the discoveries made by this laborious and indefatigable explorer should be added to the Collection, that its value as a constant object of reference may be increased, and the student of progressive Phœnician and Grecian Art may find in one collection, the complete index of that wonderful history which is at the beginning, and is the foundation, of all the Fine Arts in all the Western World. The Trustees submit this subject to the consideration of the Members. The Museum is without funds for the purchase of the collection. General Cesnola is willing and desirous to add it to the present collections of the Museum at a price very much less than he can obtain for it if he shall sell it in fragments to various European museums. The Trustees earnestly hope that it may be secured for the use of American students in the Museum galleries.

The building in the Central Park, in process of erection by the Commissioners of Parks for the use of the Museum, has progressed during the year and is now inclosed. The Trustees made an inspection of the building during the last winter, and finding that the plans were in some important respects unsuitable to the purposes of the Institution, represented their views to the Commissioners, who met them with the greatest courtesy and cordiality and exhibited the warmest desire to make every possible arrangement to meet the wishes of the officers of the Museum. Changes and improvements which the Trustees suggested were immediately adopted by the Commissioners, and the work on the building is advancing with as great rapidity as could be expected.

The Legislature has, during the late session, passed an act which authorizes the Commissioners to make a contract with the Trustees defining the tenure under which the building shall be occupied by the Museum. This provision of law will enable the Trustees to enter on the occupation of the building when complete, with such arrangements defining the tenancy as will remove all doubt of their control over the valuable treasures of art which already belong to the Institution, and those which in the course of years they expect to accumulate.

The Institution has received during the year, including

previous gifts, a number of valuable donations of works of art, a list of which, with the names of the donors, is appended to this report.

The Museum has continued to be useful to art-students in various institutions in this and the neighboring cities, and the Trustees have as heretofore furnished free tickets to the Cooper Union, the Art Students League, the Brooklyn Art Association, and to artists and students on special application, with permits for copying works of art belonging to the Museum. These tickets have been used largely, by young ladies as well as gentlemen, and the Trustees are assured of their warm appreciation of, and benefit from, the privileges thus afforded.

In closing their report the Trustees are reminded of the death during the past year, of their associate and earnest coworker, Mr. William Tilden Blodgett, who died on the 4th day of November, 1875. Mr. Blodgett was one of the founders of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, a large contributor to its funds, a steady working member and officer of the Board from its origin until his death. To his zeal, and personal interest in the advance of the Institution and of art-study in America, the Museum owes its warmest tribute of gratitude; and none can have a higher appreciation of his valuable qualities as a man, a co-worker, a patron of art, and a promoter of its civilizing and refining influences on his fellow-men, than his associates in the Board of Trustees who desire here to place on record their deep sense of the loss which they, the Institution, and our City, have suffered in his untimely death.

By order,
JOHN TAYLOR JOHNSTON,
President.